(17)

# A SERIOUS ANSWER TO A Late BOOK, STILED, A REPLY to Mr. *Robert Steel's* EPISTLE concerning SINGING.

C. BOILEAU

WHEREIN

The chief Scriptures and Arguments are examined, and the Weakneſs thereof ſhewed:

TOGETHER

With an ANSWER to the ſeveral Reflections, and falſe Charges, againſt both Churches and Perſons.

Recommended to the Elders, Miniſters, and Members of the Baptized Churches.

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*Joh. 4. 24. God is a Spirit, and they that worſhip him, muſt worſhip him in Spirit and Truth.*

*Jer. 20. 10. I heard the defaming of many; Report, ſay they, and we will report.*

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*London*, Printed in the Year, 1692.

# To the Elders, Miniſters and Members of the Baptized Churches throughout *England* and *Wales*.

*Beloved in our Lord*;

IT is a great Truth, that as we are not to omit any thing in the Solemn Worſhip of God that is of his Appointment; ſo we are not to admit any thing that is not of his Inſtitution, under any pretence whatſoever to be intruded upon us. But it is greatly to be lamented that there is a proneneſs in Profeſſors (except by Grace prevented) to turn aſide from this Holy Rule, either through the Infirmity of the Fleſh, or the Deception or Infection, which through Temptation they meet withal in the World, whereof there hath been and ſtill is continually ſad Experience. An Inſtance whereof we have in the matter we have now to preſent to your ſerious Conſideration.

When it pleaſed the Lord in Times paſt to inlighten ſome gracious Holy Perſons in that great Ordinance of Baptiſm, as it was commanded by our Lord and Saviour, and practiſed by Him and his Apoſtles, and the Primitive Churches. And therefore to caſt off Infants Sprinkling, which was ſet up in the room of it as a Humane Invention. They were then alſo, on Scripture-Grounds, well weighed and ſeriouſly conſidered, convinced that

the common way of praying to God, or praiſing of God (in what manner ſoever it were performed) by a compoſed Form (as uſually then was, and ſtill is the Cuſtom of many Proteſtants) was not of Divine Inſtitution, and therefore to be rejected. And accordingly it was in thoſe Days laid aſide by the Baptized Churches, whom the Lord then graciouſly and eminently owned by many ſignal Tokens of his Preſence among them. But now to our great Grief, ſome whoſe Duty and Place it was to have ſetled, and further to have eſtabliſhed the Churches in that Work of Reformation, are declined from it, aſſerting (with Heat and Confidence) that to ſing by a compoſed Form, with a whole Multitude lifting up their Voices together, the Ignorant and Profane, the Unbelievers or Unconverted with the Church-Members, is an Ordinance of our Lord Jeſus; which they practiſe, and with vehement Earneſtneſs are contending for: whereby the Peace and Edification of the Churches is hindred, and the Minds and Conſciences of many gracious Souls perplexed and intangled. By this they are not only building again what hath been deſtroyed, but thereby alſo there is plain Introduction unto a farther declining in Prayer, and others of the Holy Ordinances of our Bleſſed Lord and Law-giver. This common or popular way of Singing they all with great endeavour are labouring to promote in all the Churches, by their publick pleading for it, by Preaching and Printing in the defence of it. And therein they not only vehemently contradict and oppoſe whatever is preſented by any from the Holy Scriptures, to deliver them or others from that Humane Invention which hath been ſo long rejected

jected by the Churches aforesaid; but they also take a licentious Liberty to reflect upon them that would hinder their design in this matter; not only most falsly asperſing them, but also uttering a most false Accusation and Slander against the Baptized Churches in their first gathering, laying that to their Charge as a received Principle owned by them, which they had openly declared against to the whole World in their Confession of Faith, which was in those Days Printed and Published; whereby they stigmatize or brand them with the deepest Hypocrisy that depraved Mortals can be guilty of. These Things (which are matter of great Lamentation) are either evidently insinuated, or plainly declared, in a late printed Tract concerning Singing, in answer to a small Sheet published by Mr. *R. Steed*, which was intended chiefly for, and therefore written by way of Epistle to that Church to which he is related; which by some Friends that had perused it, was given also into the Hands of the Members of other Churches: wherein he only gives his understanding of what the Holy Scriptures speak concerning that Subject, without mentioning or reflecting on any others that are of a contrary Mind. But Mr. *Keach*, who is the chief Promoter of this Controversy, so as to heighten it to a Contention, said, *It must be answered, and that he would answer it.* And we do not question on good grounds, but that he and Mr. *Whinnel* (by his Instigation) joined together to contrive that Answer which they have printed: Tho Mr. *Keach*, as we are informed, did say to some, that Mr. *Wh.* was not the Author of it. It's very probable that he was not the principal, but Mr. *K.* expects to have the greatest Ho-

nour in due time of that Enterprize, as being the chiefeſt Contriver of it. But that their Book might paſs with the greater Applauſe and Credit, it is in the beginning of it recommended by an Epiſtle as a very ſober Anſwer, ſubſcribed with ſeveral Names at the Concluſion of it: Some of thoſe Perſons, whoſe Names are there ſubſcribed, are ſuch as we have no Communion with, being ſuch as are called Free-willers (or *Arminians*) holding a falling away from true Grace: And ſome others whoſe Names are ſet down, have profeſſed that they did not ſubſcribe it. And ſome that did give their conſent, ſay, they had not done it, had it not been for Mr. *Keach*'s Importunity: And one of the chief of them ſaith, that he never ſaw the Epiſtle till after it was printed, to which his Hand was ſubſcribed. So that it's uſhered in with a groſs Forgery in the beginning of it, as it is carried on with unchriſtian Reflections and falſe Accuſations, which certainly cannot conſiſt with Chriſtian Sobriety or common Honeſty, whatever may be pretended. But Mr. *Keach* who knows how to take *Refined Gold* out of another Man's Mine or Lines, made ready to his Hand, and preſent it as his own finding, tho to the great prejudice of him whoſe indeed it was, may know alſo how to take the Liberty to ſubſcribe other Perſons Names, tho without their Conſent. The ſerious Conſideration of theſe Things, as they have been matter of Trouble and Sorrow to us, ſo they have engaged ſome of us, who have hitherto been ſilent as to theſe things, now to appear for the Truth of our Lord againſt ſuch Innovations. And therefore to endeavour that the Churches may not be abuſed, nor their Members deceived by ſuch Ar-

Artifices as these are. We do not intend to answer every seeming Argument and carping Cavil, or to take notice of every unseeming Reflection contained in that printed Book of theirs: But shall chiefly insist on the main Pillars of their pretended Reasons, for that sort of Singing which they would perswade the Churches to entertain as an Ordinance of our Lord and Saviour: For if the Foundation fail, the Building cannot stand. And we shall return a Reply to some of the most gross, most false and grievous Accusations and Reflections that are therein so boldly vented; and shall leave it with you in the fear of the Lord diligently and seriously to consider, and to search the Scriptures, waiting for the Spirit of Truth to lead you into this as well as into all other Truths, that either concern your most Holy Faith or Practice, whereby you may be preserved from turning aside to those Humane Traditions, from which you have been delivered, which we desire and pray that the Lord may bless unto you for these gracious Ends beforementioned.

That which we shall endeavour (with as much plainness and brevity as the matter will bear) to lay before you, are these following Particulars.

*First*, We shall detect and answer to some of those false Reflections and Accusations cast upon us and the Baptized Churches, which are contain'd in Mr. *Whinnel*'s Epistle, and in the Book it self.

*Secondly*, We shall manifest the weakness of the Foundation on which they build their Practice of common or popular Singing, which will be apparent by an Impartial Examination of these following Enquiries.

1. Whether Singing to the Praiſe of God, according to the Phraſe or Expreſſion of it in the Holy Scriptures, be to be reſtrained, or only is to be underſtood of uttering the Praiſe due to the moſt High God by a Muſical melodious Modulation, or tuning of the Voice, as they are pleaſed to deſcribe it.

2. Whether Singing to the Praiſe of God, (according to the direction given us by our Lord in the New Teſtament) is to be performed by a compoſed ſtinted Form, by a whole mixt Multitude, with the Church-Members in the ſolemn Aſſembly of the Church, lifting up their Voices together in Conſort.

3. Whether thoſe Scriptures, *Col.* 3. 16. *Eph.* 5. 19. do command or juſtify ſuch a ſort of popular Singing in or by the Church as aforeſaid, which they ſo earneſtly contend for.

4. Whether that Hymn ſpoken of, *Mat.* 26. 30. and *Mark* 14. 26. or the Hymning, or (as it is tranſlated) the Singing the Praiſe of God by *Paul* and *Silas*, *Acts* 16. 25. do further juſtify that Practice which they plead for. And,

*Firſt*, Concerning their Reflections on us, or Accuſations againſt us; we find Mr. *Whinnel* inſinuating in the beginning of his Epiſtle, as if Cuſtom, not Conſcience, did hinder us from joining with them in their way of Singing.

To which we anſwer; *Firſt*, That it is a very unbecoming Cenſure, in which there is not the leaſt Grain of Truth or Charity exerciſed by him: The ſame raſh and unjuſt Judgment may as well be given againſt him and others, for not conforming to the Common Prayer or the Liturgy of the Church of *England*, by thoſe that are zealous for it: which we ſuppoſe he would reckon to be a very falſe and a very uncharitable Cenſure.

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*Secondly*, We do declare to him and to all Men, That the Lord knows it is not Cuſtom, or a long diſuſe or neglect of it, that makes us averſe to that Practice of theirs; But Judgment and Conſcience, knowing on a deliberate and ſerious Conſideration, that it hath no more Foundation from any Precept or Example of our Lord Jeſus or his Apoſtles to warrant it, than common ſet Form of Prayer hath. In which we are the more confirmed by the weakneſs of the Arguments, which by them and others are produced for the Juſtification of it.

But *Secondly*, He doth poſitively affirm in that Epiſtle, "That they had no mind to have publiſhed their Thoughts to the World, or to have troubled the Churches with any Diſſertations about it; but endeavoured to have a Friendly Debate with their Brethren who were conven'd to conſult the Churches Welfare: But that their endeavours therein were obſtructed by the Oppoſers (*viz. of that common way of Singing.*) And that ſoon after ſome of them from an imprudent Zeal, not only openly oppoſed it, but took to themſelves a lawleſs Liberty to calumniate thoſe who endeavoured the reſtoration of it, *&c.*

*Anſw.* To all this bold Calumny we anſwer, that we believe he cannot prove any part of it to be true: It is a very falſe Suggeſtion, which is uttered either from a falſe Information or great Forgetfulneſs, or from a ſinful Contrivance.

For firſt; Whereas he ſaith, they had no mind to have publiſh'd their Thoughts about it, *&c.* but that they were obſtructed in their Deſires and Attempts to have a friendly Debate, *&c.* We reply;

reply; What was the reaſon that before any Perſon, that was contrary-minded to that Practice of theirs, had ſaid or printed any thing publickly againſt it, that this Opinion of theirs concerning Singing, was preach'd up, and frequently and vehemently preſt by ſeveral of them in variety of Aſſemblies; and aſſerted in Print, to the view of all Men, by Mr. *Keach*, in his Treatiſe call'd *Gold Refin'd*, and in his great Book of Scripture Tropes and Metaphors; and by Mr. *H. C.* in a ſelect Treatiſe on that Subject, though with more Sobriety than any we have ſeen ſince, that hath been publiſhed on that Controverſy by any of them? Had they no mind to publiſh their Diſſertations about it? Was their publick Preaching and publick Printing for it, againſt their Minds; which was done by them before any Perſon did openly contradict them in it? Who can believe it? And all this before there was any motion or mention of a friendly Debate about it that we know of; neither as yet, do we know of any ſuch Motion ſeriouſly made, except it were for a Liberty to introduce it by a major Vote in a Church of Chriſt, *&c.* which was long after they had endeavoured to promote it by their Endeavours aforeſaid. If we were blame-worthy in this matter, it was in being ſo long ſilent, whereby they took the opportunity to leaven ſo many honeſt Souls, and to beguile ſo many Churches (if their Number be ſo many as they boaſt of) with this irregular Doctrine and Practice; hereby it was that to ſuch a heigth of Confidence Mr. *Keach* was come, (who makes Breaches more than he repairs any) that when one did but once preach on that Subject of Singing in the Church to which he belongs

longs on a Lord's Day, far enough off from Mr. *Keach*'s Congregation; becauſe he did it not according to his Sentiments, he coming the next day or ſhortly after, in much affection to viſit him, Mr. *Keach* (having heard of his Preaching, as before mention'd) immediately falls upon him, as ſoon as ever he came into Mr. *Keach*'s Houſe, with a moſt ſevere and very uncivil paſſionate Reprimand, for daring to preach after that manner, contrary to his Judgment; as if he had the preheminence over all. But when Mr. *Marlow* did but endeavour to manifeſt the Weakneſs of Mr. *Keach*'s Arguments for common Singing, which he publickly delivered in his Meeting-houſe, not on a Lord's Day, but on a ſelect leiſure-Time when he was like to have the Company of many Perſons of ſeveral Churches, a Time ſet apart yearly by him to preach up that with other Doctrines, on purpoſe contriv'd to influence all the Churches (eſpecially in the City) with that Will-worſhip or Practice, O what a Clamour and Exclamation is there made againſt Mr. *M.* for it, by him and others of the ſame Perſwaſion with him! So that it plainly appears they had not a mind to be ſilent, as Mr. *K.* falſly ſuggeſts they had, but to publiſh all they could, by all manner of ways, for the propagating of this Opinion; and to controul all with a high imperious Hand, that ſhould ſtand in their way, or offer any contradiction to their Deſign. They had no mind to have their Arguments examined; they would indeed have none to ſpeak but themſelves.

Secondly; Whereas he ſaith they deſired a friendly Debate with their Brethren, but were ob-

obſtructed by the Oppoſers, *&c.* In this alſo we muſt charitably reckon, that he is very forgetful. For he was preſent at the General-Meeting of the Meſſengers, when he with others of them, were proffer'd a time for a friendly Conference on that Subject whenever they would deſire it. Only it was by the unanimous Conſent of the whole Aſſembly agreed, that it was not expedient to have the Controverſy argued among them at that time, becauſe it would unavoidably obſtruct them in the Buſineſs they came about, which was for the general Good of all the Churches. Indeed at the laſt General Meeting, Mr. *Whinnel* did craftily and ſurreptitiouſly, in Combination with others, on the laſt Day of that Aſſembly, when the moſt part of the Country-Meſſengers were gone home, and many of the Meſſengers of the Churches in the City abſent, a Time intended only for them that remained, to put in order what had been agreed on in the former days of their Aſſembling, that it might be preſented to the Churches; then did he preſent ſomething to be debated concerning Perſons retaining their Communion with a Church whereof they were Members, though the Practice of common Singing were, contrary to their declared Judgments and Conſciences, ſet up in it. Which being then ſo unſeaſonably preſented in the Abſence of the greater part of the Aſſembly, it was witneſſed againſt by many then preſent, as that which was not fit to be debated at that time; it ſavouring more of a politick Contrivance than of Honeſty and Candor. So that we are confident he cannot produce any time wherein a Debate of the Matter in difference, was obſtructed or oppoſed,

poſed, when there was a convenient opportunity for it.

Laſtly; Whereas he accuſeth thoſe that differ from him in this matter, for taking a lawleſs Liberty to calumniate Perſons with their Way of Singing. We anſwer; We know not, nor ever heard of any that did take ſuch a ſinful Liberty to calumniate any on that account: it muſt lie at their own doors. For when Mr. *Marlow* printed his firſt little Tract about Singing, in anſwer to what Mr. *Keach* had publickly preach'd for the proof of it, at the time aforeſaid, forthwith four or five of them appear in Print againſt him with great Vehemency and Zeal, though with very weak Arguments; and ſome of them with many bitter and untoward Reflections. Mr. *Keach* falls upon him in a publick Houſe with great Paſſion, without any Provocation given him by Mr. *Marlow*, except his anſwering his Arguments for common ſinging. One Sheet among the reſt was printed nd publiſhed by Perſons that would not, or were hamed, to write their Names at length, which as a piece, as we may call it, of Raillery, where ere was little elſe but the uncivil Abuſing of Mr. . which to render him the more infamous, was blickly tendered to Perſons in ſome of the aptized Churches in the City of *London*.

Which if Mr. *K.* was not the Inſtigator and Contriver, yet it is well known that he did promote the Publiſhing of it. But we need go no further than the peruſal of this Book, printed in anſwer to Mr. *Steed*. Surely it laid upon them no neceſſity to anſwer it, as Mr. *Wh.* would ſuggeſt. For he writ it for the Church to which he belongs:

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They cannot ſay he calumniated or reflected upon any of them, or medled with any of their Books. And the leſs need had they to write, if it be true, or that they believe what they ſay (*pag.* 3.) of their Reply, That all his Arguments were fully anſwered in their former Books before that Epiſtle was printed. Why then if it were ſo, they needed but to refer him and others to thoſe Books, and ſet down the Pages where thoſe Anſwers were to be found, and never have troubled themſelves to write, or others to read their needleſs and tedious Repetitions. But what, was it a Crime in their Eyes, that the Members of other Churches had the ſight of it? Muſt nothing be ſeen or read by others but what they will allow of, without ſuſtaining the penalty of their Contradiction, Reflection and Calumny? He gave no publick notice of it in an Obſervator for the whole Nation to know it? But if they did think in conſcience they muſt anſwer his Arguments, could it not be done without ſuch untoward Reflections and Accuſations? There's ſcarce a Leaf wherein there be not ſome untoward Slurs or other inſerted. Sometimes he is rendred by them a Promoter of Enthuſiaſm and the Notions of the *Seekers*, or an Upholder of the Way of the *Quakers*, with other ſuch like Invectives. Some of their Expreſſions ſeem more like unſavoury Jears and Scoffs than a ſober Reply, though interlarded with the Titles of *Honour'd and Dear Brother*, which may be inſerted as a covering for their uncivil treating of him, or as Oil upon the Sacrifice to make the Fire of their Indignation to pierce the deeper. But what do ſuch cauſleſs Reflections, or ſuch groundleſs Accuſations

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ons ſerve for? certainly, for nothing but Exaſperation, or to manifeſt unmortifi'd Pride and Paſſion. The Lord grant that if Mr. *Th. Wh.* or Mr. *K.* print any more Epiſtles or Books, they may put on more Sobriety, Truth and Candor, than they have in this: Which we mention, becauſe he and Mr. *Keach* in that Book, do threaten and boaſt that they will examine or anſwer every Treatiſe that ſhall come out to hinder their Deſign in this matter. Which Threatning of theirs we truſt, by the Grace of God, will quicken us to be ſo much the more diligent to defend the Truth of Chriſt in this matter; and not to give the leaſt place to them in this Controverſy by ſilence, as we have formerly done. For as we are bold to ſay, that Mr. *Whinnel* hath moſt falſly accuſed us, to ſay that any of us have taken a lawleſs Liberty to calumniate Perſons that would endeavour to ſet up his ſort of Singing in the Churches: So we do s boldly, in the fear of the Lord, declare that the Way of common Singing, which they contend for, after the Rudiments of the World, after the raditions of Men, but not after Chriſt. It is ir lawleſs Liberty they take thus to accuſe and reſent us without cauſe, in this Epiſtle and the ke, that hath neceſſitated us for Truth's ſake, that may not ſuffer by ſuch falſe Reports, to declare ch things concerning ſome of them, which otherwiſe we ſhould have buried in oblivion.

But it was not enough, it ſeems, that we ſhould be thus ſcandalouſly repreſented by Mr. *Wh.* in the Epiſtle, that did not give a ſufficient vent to their Indignation, when we look into the Book, where we might expect nothing but Anſwers to his Arguments,

ments, there alſo (as we ſaid before) we muſt be exerciſed with the reading their needleſs, cauſeleſs Reflections on Mr. *Steed*; and with their moſt falſe ſlandering of the Baptized Churches in their firſt gathering. We ſhall ſay little to their taunting Reflections againſt him, or their imperious treating of him, in their Anſwer to him: Only whereas they impertinently ſay, that Mr. *Knowles* preach'd up the Singing they plead for in the Forenoon, and that he preach'd againſt it in the Afternoon: We, upon enquiry of the Members of that Church (that were preſent at that time in the Aſſembly) find it to be utterly falſe, a meer Invention put into the Head of ſome unwary Perſon to vent, which Mr. *Wh.* and Mr. *Keach* greedily take up to proclaim without Modeſty, Sobriety or Verity; on which we may with great cauſe uſe their own exclaiming Expreſſion, *Sad Caſe!*

But it is not with Mr. *Steed* only that they thus deal; but they exhibit a very grievous and a very falſe Charge againſt thoſe of the ſame Profeſſion, that were more ancient in it than the Authors of this Reply, who vent this Scandal, or any of thoſe that by their Epiſtle have commended the ſame. When thoſe ancient Brethren were convinced of their duty, That Believers, upon Confeſſion of their Faith, were the only Subjects of Baptiſm, and accordingly, ſate down together in Communion as a Congregation or Church of Chriſt; and many in the Nation began to enquire into the truth thereof, they met with many harſh Cenſures and falſe Charges caſt upon them to make the Truth of Chriſt contemptible, (*viz.*) That they were corrupt in the Doctrines of the Goſpel; That they

they denied Subjection to Magiſtates; that they held, that to maintain Miniſters was Antichriſtian, *&c.* They to clear themſelves, and to take off thoſe falſe Charges, did think it their duty to publiſh to the Nation a Confeſſion of their Faith; which when drawn up, was read in the Churches, being then ſeven in number; and conſented to by all the Members, not one diſſenting, and ſubſcribed by two of each Church in the name of the reſt. Which Confeſſion of Faith was five times printed in that year 1644, and from that, to the year 1651, without the leaſt alteration of any one Article of what was firſt printed: which Confeſſion gave ſuch general Satisfaction to moſt Chriſtians of all ſorts of differing Perſwaſions from us, that it took off from many that Prejudice and Offence that was formerly taken by them againſt our Profeſſion. What the Judgment of thoſe Churches in their firſt Conſtitution, was, concerning the Maintenance of Miniſters, may be ſeen in the [illegible]th Article, in theſe words, *We do believe that the due Maintenance of Miniſters ſhould be the free and voluntary Communication of the Church: That according to Chriſt's Ordinance, they that preach the Goſpel, ſhould live on the Goſpel*, &c. And accordingly they did then, and we have ever ſince made it our Practice, as a Duty required of all the Members of the Church that are able to give. True it is, that our Churches ſince the firſt, have not been filled with many of them that have the Riches of this World, (*the Poor receive the Goſpel.*) But this we can ſay with comfort, and appeal to the Lord herein, That according to our Abilities, we have given to the Maintenance of our Miniſters; nor have any had any juſt cauſe to complain to

the contrary (that we know of); although it hath been, and is our trouble, that we have not been able to make ſo great a Proviſion for them as we deſire. Herein we would be underſtood in this, that we now aſſert concerning the Churches, that we mean principally as they were in the beginning: And we do find, to our great Grief, that which was then falſly charg'd upon us by thoſe that did not know us, is now as falſly (with a far greater Aggravation of their Sin) charg'd upon us by ſome of us, who might have ſatisfied themſelves, had they peruſed our Confeſſion of Faith. But either they were willingly ignorant, or negligent in enquiring, but reſolv'd to calumniate; and therefore in the *9th Page* of the ſaid Book, they charge us with the ſame things, in theſe words, " It is a Queſtion whether the ſaid Baptized " Churches in thoſe times, did not as unanimouſly " conclude and declare too, that for a Goſpel-Mi- " niſtry to have a yearly Allowance, or a compe- " tent Maintenance, was a humane Invention or " Anti-chriſtian. We ſpeak (ſay they) in part " upon our own Knowledg, and by good Infor- " mation we have had from others.

To this Charge we anſwer, That nothing can be more falſly aſſerted, or more ſlanderouſly uttered: For if this their Charge have the leaſt ſhadow of Truth againſt the Baptized Churches in their firſt beginning here in *England*; they muſt needs be the groſſeſt ſort of Hypocrites, in profeſſing the contrary by their Profeſſion of Faith, and yet believing and practiſing quite otherwiſe to what they ſolemnly profeſſed as their Faith in that matter. And we believe they cannot give one true Inſtance that any Church of the Baptiſts,

tiſts, that are found in the Faith, ever did in the leaſt conclude or declare againſt a competent Maintenance for a Goſpel-Miniſtry, as a humane Invention or Anti-chriſtian, ſince thoſe times. To conclude, as to this matter concerning their unworthy Reflections and falſe Accuſations, (tho we might inſtance in more of one ſort or other in that Book) we muſt declare that we do wonder that any Perſons, profeſſing Piety, would commend that Book as a ſober Diſcourſe, without any Limitation or Exception, againſt ſuch groſs and fulſom Slanders, which with ſo much Confidence are delivered, whatever their Judgments be concerning the Controverſy about Singing. Moreover, We hope the Baptized Churches, their Elders, Miniſters and Members, do hereby, at leaſt, ſee great cauſe to ſuſpect, and to be very cautious in believing that Spirit that would perſwade them in the way of common or popular Singing, which would make way for its Entertainment, by ſuch notorious Falſhoods and abominable Slanders, which were certainly deviſed by the Father of Lies, thereby to offend or ſtumble the Weak, tho otherwiſe honeſt and well-meaning.

Having now anſwered to ſome of their unrighteous and ſcandalous Reflections, we ſhall endeavour (as the Lord ſhall enable us) to manifeſt the Weakneſs of the main Pillars of their Aſſertion concerning the Singing before mention'd: For we ſhall not ſpend our time to anſwer every Particular in that Treatiſe, (the Weakneſs whereof is moſt evident to any that will but take any ſerious notice of it) it would be very tireſom and altogether needleſs.

Firſt then, we ſhall enquire whether Singing to the Praiſe of God, according to the Expreſſion of it in the Holy Scriptures, be to be reſtrained, or is only meant of declaring thoſe Praiſes by a Muſical Melodious tunable Voice.

To which we anſwer, That Singing or Uttering the Praiſe of God, are convertible Terms, according to the Language of the Holy Scriptures: As for inſtance, *Cant.* 2. 12. *The time of the ſinging of Birds is come*, &c. that, as able Interpreters tell us, is meant, that a Rejoicing or Praiſing-time is come. Deut. 32. 44. *And* Moſes *ſpake all the words of that Song unto the People*; and in *v.* 43. it's ſaid, *Rejoice, O ye Nations, with his People:* which is elſewhere called Singing, and ſometimes Shouting. Doubtleſs there was never a greater Song of Praiſe uttered to the Honour of Chriſt, than that *Luk.* 19. 37, 38. when the Diſciples rejoiced and praiſed God for all the mighty Works which they had ſeen; Saying, not Singing, *Bleſſed be he that comes in the Name of the Lord: Peace in Heaven, and Glory in the Higheſt.* That Muſick uttered by them with their Voices, made more Melody than any compoſed Songs that can be ſung in Metre. And as Mr. *Caryl* tells us upon that Scripture, It was Muſick the *Phariſees* did not like, but would have them rebuked for ſo doing.

*Obj.* It is indeed frequently and earneſtly pleaded by the Authors of that Book, That Singing or Sound bears that Acceptation of a Muſical Melody with the Voice amongſt all Mankind.

*Anſw.* To which we anſwer, That if it hath pleaſed the Spirit of the Lord in the Holy Scriptures, to make uſe of thoſe words in another ſenſe, what have we to ſay to it, or dare any that are truly

truly pious to contradict it? That Singing is in the Old Teſtament as well as in the New, uſed in a Metaphorical Senſe, is apparent: As where Singing to the Praiſe of God is aſcribed to inanimate Creatures as well as to others. See *Pſal.* 65. 13. *Iſa.* 49. 13. *Jer.* 12. So *Job* 38. 7. if we take the Morning-Stars for the Angels, as ſome do, they need not the faculty of Speech; or, as others, take the words for the whole Creation in their reſpective Kinds; then the word *Sing* muſt be taken figuratively, even for their Praiſing their Great Creator by ways ſutable to their ſeveral Natures; however, a Suppoſition to the contrary would be highly ridiculous. So in like manner in the New Teſtament; as for inſtance, 1 *Cor.* 14. 15. where it appears, that Singing and giving of Thanks be convertible Terms. But eſpecially we deſire it may be conſidered ſeriouſly what may be the meaning of the Mind of God in that Scripture, *Heb.* 2. 12. *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren; in the midſt of the Congregation will I ſing Praiſe to thee.* This Text was a Prophecy of Chriſt our Saviour, quoted from *Pſal.* 22. 22. For the opening of which, we ſhall repeat the Expoſition that the excellent Perſon Dr. *Owen* gives of it, as followeth;

" Firſt, *What* Chriſt will moreover do; *He will ſing Praiſes unto God.* And,

" Secondly, *Where* he will do it; In *the midſt of the Congregation.*

" The Expreſſion of both theſe is accommo-
" dated to the Declaration of *God's Name*, and
" and *Praiſing of him in the Temple.* The *ſinging of*
" *Hymns* of Praiſe unto God in the great Congre-
" gation, was *then* a principal part of his Worſhip.

" And in the firſt Expreſſion, two Things are " obſervable; (1.) What Chriſt undertakes to " do, that is, to *praiſe God.* Now this is only " Exegetical of what went before. He would *praiſe* " *God* by *declaring his Name.* There is no way " whereby the Praiſe of God may be celebrated, " like that of *declaring his Grace,* Goodneſs, and " Love unto Men, *&c.*—— (2.) The *Chearful-* " *neſs and Alacrity* of the Spirit of Chriſt in this " Work, he would do it as with *Joy and Singing*; " with ſuch a frame of Heart, as was required in " them, who were to *ſing the Praiſes of God* in the " great Aſſemblies in the Temple. (3.) Where " would he do this, בתוך קהל, *in the midſt of the* " *Congregation*; the great Congregation, as he calls " it, *v.*25. that is, the great Aſſembly of the People " in the Temple. And this was a Type of the " whole Church of the Elect under the *New Teſta-* " *ment.* The Lord Chriſt in his *own Perſon,* by " *his Spirit, in his Apoſtles,* and his Word, by all his " Meſſengers unto the end of the World, ſetting " forth the Love, Grace, Goodneſs and Mercy of " God in him the Mediator, ſets forth *the Praiſe of* " *God in the midſt of the Congregation.* I ſhall only " add, that whereas *ſinging of Hymns unto God* was " an eſpecial part of the inſtituted Worſhip un- " der the Old Teſtament, to whoſe Uſe theſe Ex- " preſſions are accommodated; it is evident that " the Lord Chriſt hath eminently ſet forth the " *Praiſe of God* in his Inſtitution of Worſhip un- " der the New Teſtament, wherein God will ever " be glorified and praiſed. This was that which " the Lord Chriſt engaged to do upon the Iſſue of " his Sufferings; and we may propoſe it unto our " Example and Inſtruction. Thus Dr. *Owen* on

that

that Text, *Pag.* 256. And again on the ſame Text, *Pag.* 258. " Moreover, the Lord Chriſt " by declaring, that he will *ſet forth the Praiſe of* " *God* in the Church, manifeſts what is the *Duty* " of the Church it ſelf; namely, to *praiſe God* for " the Work of his Love and Grace, in our Re- " demption by Chriſt Jeſus. This he promiſeth " to go before them in; and what he leads them " unto, is by them to be perſiſted in. This is in- " deed the very end of *gathering the Church*, and " of all the Duties that are performed therein, " and thereby. The Church is called unto the " *Glory of the Grace of God*, *Eph.* 1. 6. that it may " be ſet forth in them, and by them. This is the " end of the Inſtitution of all Ordinances of Wor- " ſhip in the Church, *Eph.* 3. 8,9,10. and in them " they ſet forth the *Praiſes of God* unto Men and " Angels; this is the Tendency of *Prayer*, the " Work of *Faith*, and the Fruit of *Obedience*. It " is a fond Imagination which ſome have fallen " upon, that God is not *praiſed* in the Church for " the Work of Redemption, unleſs it be done by " Words and *Hymns* particularly expreſſing it. All " *Praying*, all *Preaching*, all Adminiſtration of " Ordinances, all our Faith, all our Obedience if " ordered aright, are nothing but giving Glory to " God, for his Love and Grace in Chriſt Jeſus in " a due and acceptable manner. And this is that " which ought to be in our Deſign in all our " Worſhip of God; eſpecially in what we per- " form in the Church. To *ſet forth his Praiſe*, to " *declare his Name*, to give Glory to him by be- " lieving, and the Profeſſion of our Faith, is the " end of all we do. Thus we have the Teſtimo- ny of that worthy Perſon, that Singing to the

Praiſe of God, is not to be reſtrained, according to the Scripture, to a Muſical, Melodious, Tunable Voice.

But further, we judg it worthy to be obſerved, and ſeriouſly conſidered, the Mind of God concerning that Singing mention'd, *Rev.* 14. 2, 3. *I heard a Voice from Heaven, as a Voice of many Waters*, &c. *and they ſung as it were a new Song before the Throne*, &c.

*Note*; Firſt, it could not be a Song prepar'd in Meeter, or any of the Songs mention'd in the Old Teſtament. Becauſe,

Secondly, It was a Song they only could learn that were redeemed from the Earth.

Thirdly, This they did with Harpers harping: The Meaning of which, as Learned *Forbes* tells us, was the Hearts of the Redeemed Ones.

Fourthly, The Matter and Subſtance is then expreſſed: And Learned *Mede*, by this Song, tells us, the whole Myſtery of Evangelical Worſhip in it contained. And *Brightman* on *Rev.* 15. 2. tells us, that *Druſius* on that Place ſaith, they are called the Harps of God, becauſe God ſendeth the Joy of his Spirit into their Hearts, wherewith they may be able to give God his due Praiſe. And by this Song of the Lamb, ſaith *Brightman*, is meant that whereof mention was made, *Rev.* 14. 3. wherein they do magnify God the Father for the Grace of their Adoption in Chriſt. The Joy of the Heart is called a Song by a Metonymy, the effect ariſeth out of Faith in the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, whereby we feel the fatherly Love wherewith God doth imbrace us; which Song hath been always ſung by the Saints in all Ages.

So that whereas they tell us, where-ever Singing is mention'd in Scripture, it muſt be underſtood with a tunable Voice; it appears they did not conſider theſe and ſuch like Scriptures. We ſhall only mention one more, *Job* 29. 13. *I cauſed the Widow's Heart to ſing for joy*; whereby it appears there is Heart-ſinging as well as by Expreſſion in Meeter with the Tongue. In which Text, it appears that Joy and Singing are convertible Terms.

From all which, and many other Scriptures that might be quoted or alledged, it evidently appears, that Singing to the Praiſe of God is not to be reſtrained to a melodious tunable Voice, in the direct ſtated ſolemn Praiſing of God in his Church: And that there are Praiſes ſung to God (in the Language of the Scripture) in Praying and Praiſing, and in all the Adminiſtration of Holy Ordinances, when there is no tunable or muſical Voice heard among them; as appears from what hath been mention'd from *Heb.* 2. 12. Which we ſhall further make evident by theſe following Conſiderations.

*First*, We may conclude it to be a certain Truth, that no ſober Perſon will deny that the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, wherewith our Bleſſed Lord furniſh'd his Church upon his Aſcenſion, to be compleat and ſufficient for the fitting of his People unto every good Word and Work, for every part of his Worſhip; *Eph.* 4. 8, 11, 12, 13. yet there we find no Singing-Maſters appointed; which would have been abſolutely neceſſary, if muſical or tunable Singing with the Voice, was a Goſpel-Ordinance. The Old-Teſtament-Church had ſuch as taught to ſing Praiſe, 1 *Chr.* 25. 7. 2 *Chr.* 25. 13. which if the New-Teſtament-Church had

needed, we may reaſonably judg or conclude ſhe ſhould have had them to a higher Degree than the former. For the Worſhip preſcribed in the Goſpel, ought to exceed that under the Law; therefore if Muſical Singing be that which is now required, then the beſt Voices in Singing do moſt acceptably perform that Duty to God, at leaſt in the outward part of it: and therefore it would be abſolutely neceſſary that all Chriſtians, both Men and Women, ſhould learn from ſuch as can teach them, to elevate their Voices and Tunes in the higheſt Strain: Seeing they call this an Ordinance of the New Teſtament, and that no other can be called Singing, though Perſons with never ſo great a Senſe of the Majeſty of God, and of their Mercies received, with the greateſt ſpiritual Melody and Inlargement of Heart utter his Praiſe; but no ſuch Gifts being given, nor any ſuch Art required, we may ſafely conclude, it is not a Goſpel-Ordinance.

*Secondly*, If Muſical ſinging with the Voice be a Goſpel-Ordinance, as they aſſert, then aſſuredly the Songs of Praiſe recorded in the New Teſtament, would have been written in Greek Verſe, as an Example for others to have followed them in their Language: But that it is otherwiſe, is manifeſt to all that can read the Greek Teſtament. Moreover It is not ſaid that thoſe that uttered thoſe Songs, did it with a Muſical tunable Voice; but only that they ſpake after a ſolemn and audible manner thoſe Praiſes: As may be ſeen from the Song of the bleſſed Virgin *Mary*, to thoſe mention'd in the *Revelations*.

*Laſtly*, Whereas they frequently ſay, that we admit or allow of no ſinging Praiſe to, or praiſing of

of God in the Church, but what is in Prayer.

We anſwer; We are indeed for praiſing of God with our Supplications to him for Mercy: But if the Holy Spirit fills any that are qualified for the Adminiſtrations of his Houſe, with the Joy of the Lord, and ſo with the matter of Praiſe; ſuch may expreſs it (without mentioning any Petitions) with a ſolemn, chearful, audible Voice, as the Spirit of the Lord may give Utterance, either with or without a tunable Voice, to the Glory of God, and Refreſhing of others: Which is ſinging Praiſe in the New-Teſtament Language, whereunto they have not, nor can they prove, that according to the Scripture-Dialect aforeſaid, a muſical tunable Voice is eſſential. We ſhall now come to the ſecond Enquiry, which is as followeth.

*Quer.* 2. Whether ſinging the Praiſe of God in the Church of Chriſt, ought to be by a compoſed Form, by the whole Multitude aſſembled, Profeſſors with the Profane or Ignorant; or the Church-Members of all ſorts lifting up their Voices toge-er in Conſort?

In anſwer to this Queſtion, that we may the re diſtinctly reſolve it, we ſhall divide it into eral Branches or Particulars, and ſpeak to them erally. Namely,

*Firſt*, We ſhall conſider whether ſinging the raiſe of God in the Church of Chriſt, may be erformed by a compoſed ſtinted Form?

*Anſw.* 1. In anſwer to which, we deſire it may be remembred, that the Inſtitutions left by our Lord Jeſus in the Goſpel, as they are very plain, ſo they are more Spiritual, and require more of the Spirit than under the Law; therefore we have a more plentiful effuſion of the Spirit promiſed: It being

being a State of more Grace, as well as of more Truth. Therefore our bleſſed Lord and Saviour, as he procured by his Death, ſo by his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion, he ſent his Holy Spirit unto us, to fit us for the Worſhip of God, that we might have more intimate Converſe with him, in the Obſervation of what he hath commanded, *Mat.* 28. 19.

2. In the great Goſpel-Duties of Prayer and Praiſing God, he hath graciouſly promiſed the aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit, both what to pray for, as well as how we are to pray; Rom. 8. 26. *For we know not what to pray for as we ought; but the Spirit it ſelf maketh Interceſſion for us.* Where we obſerve, that which reſpects the manner and frame of Heart in Prayer, reſpects alſo the matter of Prayer. Indeed we are poor Worms, and know not how to order our Cauſe before him, unleſs we are aſſiſted both in Matter (in the time of Worſhip) as well as Manner. And as it is in Prayer, ſo is it in Praiſes, which Duty ought certainly to be as ſpiritually performed as Prayer; and we need as great aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit to Praiſe, as to Pray. But if Goſpel-ſinging the Praiſe of God, be with a Muſical Voice, and the Form before compoſed in Verſe, then we know what to praiſe God for: The Miniſter, or ſome one, brings that Matter compoſed in writing, or in print, in his Pocket; and then what need will there be of the Spirit of God to help us what to pray for?

3. But if it be objected, that we ought beforehand to conſider the Mercies we have received.

We readily grant it; and do affirm, that alſo in Prayer we ought to conſider our Wants, to beg Supplies; and our Sins, to beg Pardon: But alſo in preſenting them before the Lord, we need the Aſſiſtance

ſtance of the Spirit to order our very Requeſts before him. And that it's the Experience of every Servant of God, that in Prayer to God, and in Praiſes of God, their Hearts are inlarged in matter far beyond the Preparations of matter in either of thoſe Holy Exerciſes. This is one of the moſt pregnant Arguments uſed againſt ſtinted Forms of Prayer, by thoſe Miniſters that ſo do; even that it is a ſtinting the Spirit of God in that Duty; as alſo contrary to the bleſſed Deſign of the Lord Chriſt in his Aſcenſion, mentioned *Eph.* 4. 8. And therefore we cannot ſee but it muſt neceſſarily follow, but that if a ſet-Form of Praiſes, compoſed and brought into the Church in the publick Worſhip of God, is lawful, or as an Inſtitution appointed by him; then certainly a ſet-Form of Prayer ought to be provided alſo, as a part of the publick Worſhip of God, for the Peoples Prayers. And certainly, would they but ſeriouſly conſider their own Arguments that perſwade them to be againſt ſet-form Prayer, the ſame would confute their Notions againſt ſet-form Singing, if indeed they be againſt ſet-form Prayer. For they that can ſo vehemently plead in that Book for reading Songs of Praiſe, and for reading Sermons, and call it Preaching in the Church; why ſhould they not be for reading Prayers there alſo? eſpecially when their Arguments for both are for the moſt part the very ſame that others urge for ſet-form Prayer. As for what they moſt impertinently alledg for their Vindication in this Matter, from the Song of *Moſes*, and the Hymn mentioned *Mat.* 26. 30. with *Col.* 3. 16. they will be conſidered in their due place.

*Secondly*, We ſhall enquire, whether for a mixed Multitude, Profeſſors and Profane, Believers and Un-

Unbelievers, to ſing in Conſort in the Church, be an Ordinance of our Lord Jeſus, according to his New-Teſtament-Inſtitution.

1. We deſire it may be ſeriouſly conſidered that there is not the leaſt mention of it in the New Teſtament, by any Precept or Example, wherein we are directed in the Worſhip of God. Certainly if our Lord Jeſus was moſt faithful in the Houſe of God, and if his Apoſtles did faithfully declare the whole Counſel of God to the Churches, then they would not have failed to have declared this alſo: So that it is purely a Humane Invention, without any ſhadow of ground for it in the Scriptures before mentioned, which are the only Rule to guide us in the ſolemn inſtituted Worſhip of God in his Church. If this Arguments hold good againſt the common Practice of Infants Sprinkling (called Baptiſm) as undoubtedly it doth; then it doth alſo as evidently prove that this way of common Singing is a Tradition of Men, and not an Ordinance of our Lord Jeſus.

2. As there is not the leaſt mention of it, as aforeſaid, ſo it is directly contrary to what our Lord Jeſus hath plainly declared, both as to the Qualification of the Worſhippers, as well as to the manner of Worſhip in Goſpel-Times; Joh. 4. 23. *The true Worſhippers ſhall worſhip the Father in Spirit and in Truth, &c.* Can the Unbelievers, the Ignorant and the Profane, thus worſhip the Father? are they thus qualified? or are they capable ſo to do? So that this Practice of theirs is a plain Contradiction to the Will of our Lord and Law-giver, in that Affair of Solemn Worſhip, which therefore ought to be rejected by all the upright in Heart.

3. Here-

3. Hereby there is an Opportunity given them to make, or to ſpeak a Lie before the Lord, to take his Name in vain, while they ſpeak that which they do not underſtand, and utter that as the frame of their Hearts which they do not receive in their Minds, nor can they know them, or truly affect them, while they remain in an unconverted Eſtate, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned. Now to be acceſſary unto, or to promote ſuch a Tranſgreſſion in the ſolemn Worſhip of God, which they unavoidably do who ſet up this common way of Singing, is a Practice that cannot be juſtified. There is more to be added to ſhew the great Irregularity of this common Practice, which muſt be referred to its proper place.

*Object.* But they object, That we admit them to be preſent, and to join with their Hearts in our publick Prayers, which is as much, or more than lifting up their Voices in ſinging in the Church.

*Anſw.* To which we reply; That it is true we do mit them at the time of Prayer and Preaching to preſent, and ſo we can and do to the Spectators and Hearers, when we partake of the Lord's Supper: not knowing by what means the Lord may work upon them, or give them Repentance unto Life. But that which is affirmed, that they join with us with their Hearts in Prayer, is no true Aſſertion: They do not ſo join with us, becauſe they cannot. For the Holy Spirit, who knows the Hearts of all Men, plainly tells us, that Perſons while Unbelievers and Unconverted cannot ſo do, as is moſt evident from that Scripture, *Rom.* 10. 14. *How can they call on him, on whom they have not believed?*

*Object.*

*Object.* But they ſay, Some have been converted by their Singing; for Pſalms are full of Inſtruction, *&c.*

*Anſw.* 1. We grant that Pſalms are full of Admonition and Inſtruction: but we deny that the Muſical Tunes do inſtruct, but the Matter it ſelf that is ſung. And if it be Matter it ſelf that doth only inſtruct, as you would ſeem to acknowledg, then it is not Muſick, but the Matter.

2. Tho ſome ſhould be converted by their Muſical Singing, yet it cannot be a Rule to judg that way of Singing to be an inſtituted Ordinance of Chriſt in the Church. Some we know have declared they have been converted by the hearing of Common Prayer; yet we ſuppoſe they will not therefore acknowledg that Common Prayer is an inſtituted Ordinance of Chriſt. Alſo ſome have profeſſed that they have been converted by partaking of the Sacrament in the way of the Nation: And thereupon, it is not many Years ſince ſeveral Learned Men imployed their Wits in writing large Treatiſes to prove it to be a converting Ordinance. And therefore, that all without Exception ought to be admitted to it. But we do ſuppoſe it is not their Judgment,

*Object.* They again pretend they do not join with Unbelievers, but Unbelievers with them, in the Work.

*Anſw.* 1. Then by this poor Excuſe, if Unbelievers will come and partake with them at the Lord's Supper, of the Bread and the Wine, they may permit them ſo to do, and pretend that they do not join with Unbelievers in that Ordinance, but they with them: And ſo quickly bring the World and the Church into One; that is, Chriſt and *Belial*

*lial* to have Communion together, unto which this Practice and the Reaſon for it have a direct Tendency.

2. If they plead for this Practice as lawful, as that which is a converting Ordinance, as that which is warranted by the Word of God: Certainly they do more than permit, they do admit and call them to it.

*Object.* But it is further and earneſtly urged, that it is a natural Duty that all without exception are enjoined to do.

*Anſw.* 1. We grant that Worſhip was due to God by the Light of Nature: And ſay further, that Spiritual Worſhip was due from Man as his Creature, inaſmuch as God is a Spirit; but the outward Means of that Worſhip, what would be acceptable unto God, was not known by the Light of Nature. This was only known by poſitive Inſtitution, and depended not on the Law of Creation. *Adam* in Innocency knew that God was to be worſhipped, yet by Nature he did not know by what outward Acts he was to pay this to his Creator: This depended on the Direction of God, as the Sovereign Lawgiver ſhould preſcribe. And therefore we find the poſitive Inſtitution of the Tree of Knowledg of Good and Evil, *&c.* The Pillars upon which the Worſhip of God ſtands, cannot be known but by Revelation.

2. We ſay, that as God alone knows how, and by what means himſelf will be worſhipped; ſo it is not in the Power of Men or Angels to preſcribe Worſhip to his Creature; and that it is an intrenchment upon his Soveraignty for any ſo to do: Man being to obſerve whatſoever he, and he only, hath commanded.

3. It is evident that in all the inſtituted Worſhip that God hath preſcribed, it is with all Plainneſs both in Matter and Manner. And that God hath always done, even in the firſt Inſtitution God gave to *Adam*, not to eat of the forbidden Fruit: It was with that plainneſs and clearneſs, that no Objection could be made by him in his diſobeying the Command of God. Alſo in all the Tabernacle and Temple-Worſhip, every particular direction thereunto, to the very Pin in the Tabernacle, was given to them, that they might not vary from, without Sin. And therefore the leaſt Addition or Detraction from it, was ſeverely puniſhed by God. And now it is much more plain under the Goſpel-Adminiſtration, tho more Spiritual. And the Worſhippers that are admitted to perform or celebrate it in his Church, are required even in the outward part, both as to their Qualifications and Exerciſe, to be more Spiritual than under the Law.

4. Therefore tho the Obligation to worſhip is natural, and that it is to be performed with the higheſt Reverence and Affection concreated with Man: yet the whole of external Worſhip is poſitive, and depends upon Inſtitution. Nature is ſilent therein, otherwiſe than as it regulates, with reſpect to Conveniency and Decency, in common with other actions, in matters of leſs moment than Worſhip, to wit, Marriage and Meats. Man was created with an Inſtinct for Nutrition and Procreation, but was directed unto the means and manner of both by Inſtitution. So in the preſent Caſe, that God is to be honoured and praiſed, is an innate Principle; but the means how, or which way, or by whom it is to be manag'd in his Church, depends only on his Soveraign Will and Pleaſure declared

declared in his Word: Which that he will be thus worſhipped by a mix'd Multitude lifting up their Voices together in Muſical Singing, he hath no where declared in his New Teſtament: and therefore, the pretence of proving it from its being a natural Worſhip, falls to the ground, having not the leaſt weight in it to juſtify ſuch a Practice.

*Obj.* It is further argued by them, That *Moſes* and the Children of *Iſrael*, that were a mix'd Multitude, ſung by a compoſed Form; therefore we ought to do ſo now.

*Anſw.* 1. We deſire it may be ſeriouſly conſidered that this alledged of the Song of *Moſes*, belongs to the Old-Teſtament-Diſpenſation; unto which we now in Goſpel-times are not to have recourſe to direct us in the poſitive Part of Worſhip; we muſt therein hearken to the Son, and not to the Servant. We may as well argue (as many do) from the Children of *Iſrael*'s, with their Offſpring, being, as the Apoſtle ſaith, all baptized unto *Moſes* in the Cloud and in the Sea, for the Baptiſm of Infants now; and ſo in like manner from Circumciſion: as to conclude from their manner of Singing to ſuch a manner now.

2. It is plain that it was an extraordinary Song for an extraordinary Occaſion, that we do not find was enjoined to be ſung afterwards in their Tabernacle or Temple-Worſhip: Nor do we find that ever the whole Congregation were afterwards to ſing in Conſort, or with all their Voices together; which they cannot deny. Therefore if it were not admitted for a conſtant Practice then, nor any ſuch thing commanded by our Lord Jeſus ſince to his Goſpel-Churches, we may wonder with

what ſhadow of pretence they ſhould alledg it to juſtify ſuch a kind of Singing now. They have only this poor ſorry Evaſion concerning their not Singing afterwards ſo in conſort together, That the *Levites*, the Singers, ſung together; and therefore all may now ſing together: which is a ſtrange way of fallacious Arguing, eaſily to be ſeen and exploded by all. But conſider, thoſe *Levites*, or Singers, had a poſitive Direction from the Lord ſo to do. Let them produce ſuch a Command from the Lord Jeſus, our Lord and Law-giver, for his Churches now, and the Controverſy will be ended.

3. If the manner of ſinging the Song of *Moſes* be a Pattern for us now, then muſt the Women ſing by themſelves with Muſick and Dancing, as they did then, *Exod.* 15. 20. There cannot be the leaſt reaſon given, but if one be admitted, ſo must the other, if it be a directing Example for us in Goſpel-times.

4. Though it be ſaid *Moſes* ſung, and the Children of *Iſrael*, yet it doth not neceſſarily follow that they all lifted up their Voices together: It is very improbable, if not impoſſible, for 600000 to ſing together; nor could Copies of it be ſuddenly diſperſed among them all to learn it: but rather that there was ſome other way whereby through the direction of the Lord, the Song was manag'd, wherein they might all join, though not all lift up their Voices at one time. But however, ſuppoſing they did ſo, yet it ſignifies nothing in the leaſt to prove it a New-Teſtament-Inſtitution. And it is an Argument ſo manifeſtly weak and impertinent, that we may wonder it ſhould be mention'd as a Proof to warrant their Practice; but

but any Pretence ſhall ſerve the turn when Perſon are reſolv'd for a human Tradition.

*Thirdly*; The next and laſt Branch of this general Enquiry to be conſidered, is, Whether it be enjoined by our Lord Jeſus as a Goſpel-Ordinance, for all the Members of a Church, both Men and Women, to ſing a compoſed Form read to them, by lifting up their Voices together?

*Anſw.* 1. To this we ſay, That having already manifeſted that a compoſed Form of praying to, or praiſing of God, doth not comport with that Aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit promiſed not only to aſſiſt us in our Preparation for ſuch ſolemn Exerciſes, but alſo to help us both as to Matter and Manner in the very time of that ſacred Work; and therefore, to be rely'd upon and expected by all that deſire ſpiritually to worſhip him, according to the New-Teſtament-Direction and Diſpenſation; and therefore not ſutable, but contrary to the Deſign of our Lord in his Aſcenſion, ſpoken of *Eph.* 4. 8. Therefore we ſhall ſay no more to it now, but refer the Reader to what was before declared; neither can there be any true ſolid Reaſon given, why if the Members of a Church of Chriſt may have a compoſed Form of Praiſes written and read to them to ſing, why may they not have a compoſed Form of Prayer read to them alſo, for them audibly to repeat over, as the manner of ſome is?

2. All the Members may not lift up their Voices together, becauſe the Women are expreſly forbidden to teach, or ſo to ſpeak in the Church: Singing being for Teaching, as hereafter will be declared. Neither doth the Holy Spirit except this exerciſe of Singing with their Voices, as if they

were therein allowed: Had this Liberty been granted, or this as a Duty enjoyned them, there's no queſtion but the Apoſtles, who faithfully deliver'd the whole Counſel of God, would have declared it; and for any to make Exceptions where the Lord hath made none, is to be adding to his Word, or to be partial in his Law.

*Obj.* But they alledg, to juſtify this Practice, that *Miriam* and *Deborah* ſung in the Congregation.

*Anſw.* 1. We deſire it may be remark'd how they are ſtill conſtrained to fly to Old-Teſtament-Inſtances, to juſtify their popular Way of Singing; they having not the leaſt ground for it in the New Teſtament. But herein, how manifeſtly do they ſtrengthen the Hands of them that are for Infants Baptiſm, who fetch their ſtrongeſt Arguments from the Old-Teſtament-Inſtances and Practice to prove it. Which way of Arguing, if it be allowed of, how ſoon will the Worſhip of God, according to the Goſpel, be perverted or chan from its Primitive Purity in all reſpects.

2. It is plain, as hath been declared, *Exod.* 15. that *Miriam* and the Women did not ſing with Men: they ſung by themſelves with Timbrels Dancing. If that Example be authentick to ju Womens Singing now, then it muſt be by th ſelves with Muſick and Dancing; which as they dare not plead for now to be practiſed. for *Deborah*, her Song was by an extraordinary I ſpiration; and it appears by the manner of he expreſſing it, that ſhe ſpake it or ſung it alone; though *Baruch* might join with her in Spirit: neither is there the leaſt Intimation in the Scripture that ſhe ſang in the Congregation. But what a

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pitiful irrational Argument is this; becauſe a Woman, extraordinarily call'd and inſpir'd, uttered or ſung a Song by that extraordinary Inſpiration, on an extraordinary occaſion; therefore all the Women in a Church may ordinarily, though under no ſuch Inſpiration, ſing a compoſed Song of another's making, though they have no direction for it in the Word of the Lord, but are rather commanded and enjoined to be ſilent there. Surely it is a bad Cauſe that cannot be ſupported or pleaded for, but by ſuch incoherent groundleſs Inferences as theſe, which they might be aſhamed to publiſh.

3. We find, according to the Direction and Commandment of our Lord and Lawgiver, a Pſalm is to be manag'd after another manner in the Church of Chriſt. For in *1 Cor. 14. 26.* where it is mentioned plainly, with reference to the publick Worſhip of God in the Church; it is moſt evident, by the Context from *ver.* 24, to 31. that there it is under the general Regulation of the Gift of Prophecy, and the Exerciſe thereof limited unto one, as farther appears from the *16th* and *17th Verſes*, without the leaſt intimation of it being confined or reſtrained to any thing Muſical or in Meeter, in the Delivery of it. Moreover, it may be certainly concluded, that if ſinging or uttering the Pſalm was to be by lifting up of their Voices in Conſort, when the Apoſtle had by the command of the Lord, limited them to one at a time in their Exerciſes in the Church, he would not have failed to have plainly told them, that the Pſalm was otherwiſe to be manag'd.

*Obj.* But to this plain and undeniable Teſtimony they earneſtly plead that the Apoſtle ſpeaks there of Propheſying, not of Singing.

*Anſw.* To which we anſwer; The Pſalm is there plainly and evidently manifeſted, to belong to the Gift of Prophecy as much as the Doctrine or Interpretation, and is included in it. He propheſy'd that uttered a *Pſalm*, as much as he that declared the Doctrine or the Exhortation: Therefore it appears that ſinging or uttering the Pſalm, is plainly included in the Limitation of one at a time, as well as the reſt of thoſe ſolemn Exerciſes; which Pſalm was from a ſpecial ſpiritual Gift, as much as any other there mention'd. For if the Pſalm (aforeſaid) might be one taken out of a Book, or out of the Old Teſtament; why ſo might the Doctrine or Exhortation be nothing elſe but a reading ſomething out of a Book, or out of the Scripture, there being plainly as much ground for the one as for the other; which would be a groundleſs Imagination: Therefore Mr. *Burroughs* with others of the Godly Learned, do own that the Pſalm there ſpoken of, was by ſpecial Gift; and therefore, for any to imagine it to be any of *David*'s Pſalms, is to give up themſelves to any Fancy or Suppoſition, ſo they may contradict the Truth which is ſo apparently manifeſted in that Portion of the Scripture, becauſe they are reſolv'd not to entertain it.

*Obj.* But they again cavilingly object, Can this be proved by any other place of Scripture? if not, ſay they, it muſt be rejected.

*Anſw.* To which we reply; That the Lord is here pleaſed to give a moſt plain Direction how a Pſalm is to be brought forth or ſung in a Goſpel-Church, not by a compoſed Form, but by ſpecial Gift, and not by the whole Aſſembly lifting up their Voices in conſort, but by one who hath received

ceived ſuch a Gift. And this being ſo evidently declared, ſhould we not reſt ſatisfied with it? Shall we queſtion the Truth of a Divine Oracle, becauſe but once mention'd, though it be never ſo plainly delivered? Our Lord Jeſus is but once called a Surety: Shall we therefore queſtion or deny the Truth of it, as the *Socinians* do? *Heb.* 7, 22. Surely on this Ground, the *Hebrews* might have rejected the Apoſtle's Proof of the Being and Excellency of the Prieſtly Office of our Lord and Saviour, that he was a High-Prieſt after the Order of *Melchizedeck*, becauſe it was but once mention'd in the Old Teſtament, *Pſal.* 110. 4.

Thus having (we hope) evidently proved that the muſical tunable Singing of a compoſed Form by a whole Aſſembly, with Voices in conſort, is no Ordinance of our Lord Jeſus; We ſhall now examine the Scriptures they earneſtly urge to juſtify their Practice.

Q. 3. Whether thoſe Scriptures, *Eph.* 5. 19. *Col.* 3. 16. do command or juſtify that kind of ſinging in the Church of Chriſt which they plead for?

In anſwer to this Enquiry, it being that on which Mr. *Keach* and Mr. *Whinnel* do bottom their aſſertion for the introducing the common and popular Way of Singing into the Baptized Churches; We ſhall firſt premiſe ſome Conſiderations, which we deſire may be ſeriouſly pondered.

*Firſt*; That thoſe Scriptures (ſuppoſing they intend a Direction for publick Worſhip in the Church, which we do not grant, on the Reaſon hereafter to be mention'd) do plainly teſtify againſt the admitting of the Profane, the Ignorant, and the Unconverted to ſing in the ſolemn Aſſembly

ſembly of the Church of Chriſt; foraſmuch as they are to be ſung for the Teaching and Admonition of others. Did the Lord Jeſus ever appoint the Ignorant, Profane, or Unbelievers, to be Teachers in, or Admoniſhers of his Church, according to his New-Teſtament-Diſpenſation? Can there be the leaſt ſhadow of Proof produced for it? Certainly, as it was then told them in that Epiſtle of Mr. *Steed*'s, (which they pretend to anſwer) that he never appointed any to adminiſter Teaching and Admonition to his Church, but ſuch as are orderly added to it, and are qualified by the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, being ſolemnly allowed or orderly called to ſuch an holy Exerciſe: this being ſuch a Truth which they could not, nor did they dare directly to gainſay. How groſly do they endeavour to evade it, by ſaying that they are allowed to worſhip God (which is as much as to ſay, to attend on the Worſhip of God) in the Church? Now we appeal to their own Conſciences, whether there be not a great difference between being at, or attending on it as them that do worſhip God, and adminiſtring Teaching and Admonition to the Church? Which if the ſinging of the Pſalms and Hymns, *&c.* here mentioned are for that end and uſe, as it's evident from the Scriptures they are; then ſuch Perſons are plainly excluded from any ſuch ſolemn Exerciſe in the Church, if the meaning of it be for a Direction for the publick Worſhip of God in the Church, as they would inſinuate.

Moreover, that it plainly excludes ſuch from that kind of Singing in the Church, is moſt evident; inaſmuch as it is expreſly declared, that the Singing there ſpoken of, is to be brought forth from

from the Word dwelling richly in them, *Col.* 3. 16. and from being fill'd with the Spirit, *Eph.* 5. 19. Now are Unbelievers, *&c.* capable of being ſo qualifi'd in any degree? Indeed in their Way of Singing by a compos'd Form, there needs no more than the reading or hearing a Pſalm or Song read to them; and then they are ſufficiently furniſh'd for it, be they never ſo ignorant, profane or unbelieving. In anſwer to which, they ſay they deteſt ſuch a Singing: But why then do they plead for the Singing of ſuch, before mention'd, who can ſing no otherwiſe, but in a carnal formal Manner? Can they in truth ſay, they deteſt that they allow and openly practiſe, and vehemently contend for?

*Secondly*; Theſe Scriptures, if they be as they ſay, to direct the Church in its publick Worſhip, do alſo plainly exclude the Women from ſinging in the Church: They are expreſly forbidden to teach or admoniſh in the Church, but are commanded to be in ſilence; without any exception that they may teach by Singing, but not by an ordinary Speaking, as we have before declared.

*Thirdly*; In like manner (if it be meant as aforeſaid) thoſe Pſalms and Hymns, *&c.* there mention'd, are not intended to direct the Churches to ſing *David*'s Pſalms, or any other Pſalms recorded in the Scriptures; for then certainly our Lord Jeſus would have cauſed them to have been tranſlated into Greek Verſe, or Meeter, for the uſe of the Churches in thoſe times, and as a Pattern for time to come. But none ever did or can aſſert any ſuch thing; neither is that Saying of theirs of any weight, whereby they would ſeem to prove that, becauſe the word *Pſalm*, &c. is there mention'd, that it muſt needs be meant of thoſe

called

called the *Pſalms of* David, *&c.* becauſe (ſay they) God hath given us a Pſalm-Book but not a Prayer-Book (an Expreſſion which they have borrowed from others) in the Scriptures: For in that ſacred Book there be abundance of the Prayers of holy Men recorded, as well as their Songs; and eſpecially, that our Lord Jeſus hath left as a Platform in the manner of a Form of Prayer, uſually called by the name of the Lord's Prayer: Therefore if we may take their Songs, and read and ſing them in the Church, why may we not alſo take thoſe Prayers, (at leaſt ſuch as we may think moſt ſutable to our preſent occaſion) and read them there for our Prayers in the Church? Let them ſhew, if they can, why there is not as much reaſon for the one as for the other. Moreover; The Book of *Pſalms*, as they were ſung in the Old-Teſtament-time, (for which ſeaſon they were ordained) were a part of the Temple-Worſhip. Now if that be our Rule for Muſical ſinging of them now, as it muſt be if they be thoſe Pſalms that be here commanded to be ſung Muſically, as a part of the New-Teſtament-Church's publick Worſhip, then it muſt be our Rule in all parts (which muſt be neceſſarily included in this Counſel, if the Meaning of it be as they affirm) and ſo there muſt be Inſtruments of Muſick with Singers or Quiriſters in the performance of it, except they can prove that one part is aboliſhed, and the other remains: *For what God hath joined together, no Man may put aſunder.*

*Fourthly*; If it be for the publick Worſhip of the Church that this Direction is given; then as it was aſſerted by Mr. *St.* in his Epiſtle, it muſt not be by lifting up of Voices in Conſort, becauſe thoſe Pſalms,

Pſalms, &c. muſt be for teaching and admonition: therefore ſome are to teach, and ſome to be taught by them that ſing thoſe Pſalms. But if all ſing, they are all Teachers, and all Admoniſhers at one Time. Which is Confuſion in the Judgment of our Lord, 1 *Cor.* 14. 33. Now what do they anſwer to this, which is ſo plainly declared in that Direction given for the ſinging or uttering a Pſalm in the Publick Worſhip of the Church, as well as the bringing forth of the Doctrine? Verily nothing, but either a plain Contradiction of the Judgment our Lord hath given us in this matter, ſaying, tho it would be Confuſion in Preaching or Praying, yet it is not ſo in Singing: which is ſtill confidently to beg the Queſtion, to dictate and not to prove, to ſet their Judgment, or the Opinion of Men, againſt the Judgment of the All-wiſe God: Or elſe they fly to that Inſtance of *Moſes* his Song, *Exod.* 15. 1. which how impertinently it is alledged, to guide us now in the Times of the Goſpel, hath been already declared.

Secondly; Having premiſed theſe Things: We anſwer poſitively (and we deſire it may be ſeriouſly conſidered) that it appears plainly, that thoſe Scriptures, *Eph.* 5. 19. *Col.* 3. 16. tho they are written as a part of the Epiſtles that were directed to particular Churches, yet they do not ſeem in any reſpect to refer to their Publick Church-Worſhip, but to regulate their ordinary Chriſtian Converſation, either ſolitary by themſelves, or in private one with another, as is manifeſt by comparing or conſidering their ſeveral Contexts in thoſe Chapters, whereof theſe Verſes are a part, both as to what goes before and follows after. That in the Epiſtle to the *Epheſians* ſtands directly oppoſed to Corporal Drunkenneſs. We

We do not oppoſe, or deny, but that it may be lawful for a Chriſtian, or for ſeveral Chriſtians in their private or civil Society, if their Hearts be chearful, and that they have skill in Singing, and take pleaſure therein, to ſolace themſelves therewith; provided it be done decently, and that the Matter of their Song be ſuch as tends to Edification, according to that of *James* 5. 13. So that from the whole it's moſt evident that thoſe Scriptures, in what Senſe ſoever they are taken, do not in the leaſt juſtify that manner of Singing as a Goſpel-Ordinance, to be uſed in the publick Worſhip of the Church, which they do ſo earneſtly contend for. But it is moſt evident, that in 1 *Cor.* 14. 26. (before ſpoken to) doth clearly relate to the guiding of them in Publick Worſhip, in the ſolemn Aſſembly of the Church, which we ſhall not again inſiſt on.

*Obj.* But if any ſhall be ſo weak as to object, and ſay, If any ſuch kind of melodious Teaching or Admoniſhing may be lawfully uſed by Church-Members in their private Converſation, why may it not alſo be uſed in the publick Worſhip of the Church?

*Anſw.* We anſwer; Tho it be uſed in a civil or private Converſe, yet it ought not to be admitted in the Worſhip of God in the Church, without a Command from the Lord Jeſus enjoining it to be a ſtanding Ordinance in his Church: For it is well known, that there be Ways of Teaching that are lawful, and ought to be practiſed in private, which would be very diſorderly & unlawful to be introduced into the publick Worſhip of God in the Church. As for inſtance, *Priſcilla* a Woman, may inſtruct *Apollo* a Preacher, more perfectly in the way of God privately, which ſhe ought not attempt to do in

in the Church, *Act.* 18. 26. So the aged Women ought to inſtruct the younger Women, *Tit.* 2. 4. but not in the Church. Moreover, Men and Women may and ought to exhort and teach, to admoniſh or comfort one another in private (as there is occaſion and opportunity) by way of mutual Conference, diſcourſing or talking one with another. But this Way of Teaching (in the Judgment of all ſerious Perſons) is not to be admitted in the Church of Chriſt; becauſe it is no inſtituted Ordinance of our Lord Jeſus for ſuch an Aſſembly, we having no Direction or Command from him then to practiſe it; and therefore cannot expect a Bleſſing in ſo doing at ſuch a time.

Even ſo in the caſe of Singing, whatever may be lawful or allowed of in private, to be practiſed as aforeſaid; yet if it be brought into the Church, without a Warrant from our Lord Jeſus, to be uſed in ſuch an Aſſembly in ſuch a manner, it is unlawful, and not accepted by the Lord. Which Warrant is not contained in thoſe Scriptures, nor any other that they have alledged for the Juſtification of their common Way of Singing, as we have already declared, and ſhall further (God aſſiſting) make manifeſt.

Thus having examined thoſe Texts of Scripture, they chiefly plead as perceptive or commanding their manner of Singing; we ſhall now conſider thoſe Scriptures that are urged by them as Precedents to confirm it, which we ſhall propound in this following Enquiry.

*Quer.* 4. Whether our Saviour Hymning with his Diſciples, *Mat.* 26. 30, *&c.* or that, *Act.* 16. 25. where it's ſaid *Paul* and *Sylas*, at Midnight, prayed and ſung Praiſes to God, *&c.* be Precedents or Examples

amples to confirm that common way of Singing to be an Ordinance of our Lord Jesus, which they strive to set up in the Churches?

*Answ.* In answer to this Enquiry, we shall begin with that Hymning of the Lord Christ with his Disciples, *Mat.* 26. 30. upon which they lay great stress for their introducing of common set-form Singing into the Churches.

1. We say to it, as it hath been asserted, That the Hymn, before mentioned, in the Judgment of many learned Men did belong to the Passover, and not to the Lord's Supper; it being the manner of the Jews to conclude the Passover with a Psalm or Hymn. Now if they would know who those Learned Men are; we answer, all the Learned Rabbies of the Jews do assert it. See also *Ainsworth's* Notes, on *Exod.* 12. 11. The Dutch also in their Exposition, on *Mat.* 26.30. say the Hymn was at or did belong to the Passover: and that it was th 113*th Psalm*, and so forward: This may be seen their Exposition of the Bible. But to put it out doubt that there was Singing appointed and used the Passover; it is recorded in the Scripture, what is mentioned was practised in *Hezekiah's* Time, 2 *Chron.* 30. 21. It is also plain that Lord Jesus and his Disciples hymned but on Now if it was their Practice, by a Divine A pointment, to sing at the Passover, as by the Scri ture before-mentioned is evident it was: And if i be also a Duty to sing at the Lord's Supper, then our Saviour would have sung twice, once at the Passover, and once at the Supper. But they hymning but once, (if it were by Musical Voices in Consort) seems plainly to belong to the Passover: And so it was done away with it. They with more shew of

of Reaſon might argue for waſhing the Saints Feet asa ſtanding Duty, ſeeing it was practiſed at that time, *Joh.* 13. 5. with a more plain Injunction to it, which ſome of their Perſuaſion have practiſed.

2. Suppoſing it did belong to the Supper; it is a queſtion, whether they Hymned melodiouſly with a muſical Voice or no: For it is manifeſt, that the Greek word there uſed, is not in its Signification reſtrained to ſing with a melodious Voice, but may be rendred to praiſe indefinitely, whether with, or without, a tunable Voice; as it is to be ſeen in thoſe Authors that interpret Greek words: but they boaſtingly ſay, they can bring threeſcore to three, that ſay it ſignifies to ſing with a tunable Voice. To which we anſwer, that we believe they can ſcarce produce any authentick Authors that ſay it *only* ſignifies to Sing or Praiſe with external Melody. And ſo evident it was to Learned Mr. *Knowles*, (who we believe underſtood the Greek ngue as well as *Beza* and others) that he doth nt it to Mr. *Marlow* in his printed Letter to ; yea, ſo manifeſt it was to thoſe Learned Per- that formerly tranſlated the Bible into the liſh Tongue, that they rendred it to be *giving nks*, or ſaying Grace; as it is extent in their nſlations, which are to be ſeen in the Library *ion-Colledge*; who, for ought Mr. *B. K.* or Mr. . knows (tho they ſpeak undervaluingly of em) were as wiſe and as faithful as our laſt Tranſlators; tho they are pleaſed to revile their Tranſlation with the Epithets of *Old* and *Corrupt*.

3. Neither is it manifeſt, if the Hymn were ſung with a muſical Voice, whether it were in Conſort, by lifting up their Voices together, or only by attention on their Lord miniſtring to them?

As in *Acts* 4. 24. where it's ſaid, *They lifted up their Voice with one accord, and ſaid*, &c. though none can or do ſuppoſe that they all ſpoke together, but one as the Mouth of the reſt.

To which they ſay, that many may be ſaid to pray together, when one is their Mouth; but not ſo in hymning or ſinging Praiſe to God: But what Reaſon do, or can they alledg for this their Aſſertion? Why, nothing but a common or general Cuſtom with many. Surely they do but beg the Queſtion, while they only aſſert the contrary, and bring a Cuſtom for their proof. It is well known, that it is the Cuſtom of many Proteſtants, to pray by lifting up their Voices together: And they may with as good ground ſay, there is no Praying, by a Company together, without it; and bring their Cuſtom as a Proof of their Aſſertion; and ſay, they do abominate any other way of Praying to God together, as theſe ſay, they do abominate any other way of ſinging Praiſe to God, as aforeſaid. What they further ſay about what ſome affirm, not with great probability, (as they are pleaſed to expound it) That they then ſung together the 2*d Pſ.* is ſo ſenſleſs an Affirmation, not having the leaſt ſhadow of Ground for it in that Scripture, nor in its Context, that it is but waſte time to inſiſt upon it: but any Pretence ſhall be taken up, tho never ſo weak, (becauſe Proof is wanting) to juſtify human Invention.

Further; Whereas they uſually make great uſe of that Expreſſion, That he gave thanks, but they hymned, or (as our laſt Tranſlators render it) ſang an Hymn, to juſtify their Opinion, that it was done by lifting up their Voices together. To that Inſtance, it was anſwered, That it is moſt likely that

that our Lord Jeſus at that time, did give Thanks, as ſpeaking by himſelf, in the firſt Inſtitution of that Ordinance; as he uſually did before others, on ſeveral Occaſions, *Matth.* 11.25. *Joh.* 11.41. *Joh.* 17. throughout. But at the Concluſion, the Praiſe or Thanks might be ſpoken or expreſt in the plural Number, to teſtify the Refreſhment his Diſciples had with him at that ſpiritual Banquet, tho but one might be the Mouth of them all, to declare it.

Now that it was uſual with our Lord Jeſus ſo to do, they could not deny; but O how do they with Indignation cavil at it.

*Firſt*, They ſay it doth intimate as if the Diſciples did not, or were not admitted to join with our Lord in his giving of Thanks when he bleſſed the Bread: but what reaſon is there for that Inference, or affrighting Concluſion that doth attend it? might not the Diſciples join in their Hearts ſo, as ſay as *Pſal.* 20.4. which is a prophetick *Pſalm* of *Meſſiah?*

*Secondly*, They cavil, that from hence it may be queſtion, Whether the Miniſter may be allowed give Thanks over the Bread, *&c.* or whether the mbers of the Church may join with him?

To which we anſwer, That from hence they ay as well raiſe a cavilling Queſtion, Whether, ecauſe our Lord Jeſus expreſt his Prayer in the ingular Number, when with Company, and eſpecially after his comforting Sermon to his Diſciples in their Preſence, *Joh.* 17. it be allowed to the Miniſter when with the Church to pray, or for the Members to reckon they are allowed to join with him? Which certainly, would be accounted a groundleſs fained Scruple, a meer contentious Cavil as theirs is.

Our bleſſed Saviour pray'd and gave Thanks as the great repreſenting Perſon and Head of his Church, and ſo included all his Body in himſelf; being alſo the only prevailing Advocate with the Father. But we that are Members, are taught to pray otherwiſe, when together, in the plural Number; as eſpecially appears by that holy Platform or Direction of Prayer he hath left with us.

*Thirdly*, They ask, what reaſon can be given why the Hymn might at the concluſion be expreſt in the plural Number, and not ſo in the beginning at the Bleſſing of the Bread? *&c.*

We anſwer, The reaſon was plainly expreſt, becauſe it was the only Prerogative of our Lord to bleſs his own Inſtitution, eſpecially at the beginning and firſt appointing of it: But at the concluſion, his Diſciples more fully underſtanding the Grace and Love, exhibited and confirmed to them by it, might be in a bleſſed Capacity to join in the Hymn, or giving of Thanks, as expreſt in the plural Number. So that it ſtill remains ambiguous, whether it were uttered with a mutual Voice, or whether, if ſo ſung, it were by lifting up their Voices together; or whether by one, as the Voice of the reſt; or whether it did belong to the Paſſover, or to the Lord's Supper. Therefore I cannot but reckon it a very raſh Attempt to build the Baſis or Foundation of a new Inſtitution, upon the Sands of ſuch palpable or apparent Uncertainties. Had our Lord Jeſus ſaid, Do thus in imitation of me; as he ſaid, Do this in remembrance of me, in the Inſtitution of the Lord's Supper, its being an Ordinance, would not be queſtioned: and then without doubt, it would have been attended with as plain Directions, both as to the matter and manner of its Exerciſe.

*Obj.*

*Obj. Laſtly*, Whereas they ſay that it is incongruous to ſay the Hymn may intend a general Rule for giving of Thanks, yet to queſtion, whether the Hymn be binding to us.

*Anſw.* To which we ſay, it can be no Incongruity to affirm, that if by the Hymn be meant a compoſed Song, read and ſung by all the Company, it is not binding to us; it then plainly appears, to our Apprehenſion, on the Grounds formerly mention'd, to belong to the Paſſover, and not to the Supper: But if it mean only a giving of Thanks, wherein one is the Mouth of the reſt, it may be only a general Rule for a Direction for the Churches to follow in all ſuch Caſes.

Finally, It appears to be a concluſive Argument to us, that the Hymn did not appertain to, or that it was no Adjunct to the Lord's Supper; becauſe that the Apoſtle *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 23, to the 26*th*, when he there declares, that what he received of the Lord, touching that Adminiſtration, he deliver'd to them, but makes no mention of the Hymn.

*Obj.* To this clear Inſtance, they have this Evaſion, or rather utter this moſt falſe Aſſertion againſt the expreſs Word of that Scripture; which is, that the Apoſtle leaves out another part of the Solemnity; he does not mention, (ſay they) that our Saviour, when he took the Cup, gave Thanks, as well as he doth not mention the Hymn.

*Anſw.* To which we anſwer, That it is moſt evident and plain, that the Apoſtle doth mention that Solemnity about the Cup, as well as the other. It is a wonder to us, that they ſhould be ſo bold as to ſay he did not: For theſe are the words of that Scripture, *v.* 24. *He took the Bread, and when he had given Thanks, he brake it.* V. 25. *After the ſame manner*

*ner alſo he took the Cup.* Now is not this a plain mentioning of giving of Thanks at the taking of the Cup as well as of the Bread, in the underſtanding of the meaneſt or weakeſt amongſt Men? How elſe could he ſay in truth, After the ſame manner alſo he took the Cup? That they ſhould dare to aſſert the contrary, notwithſtanding ſuch clear Evidence, delivered with ſuch Plainneſs, is Matter of great lamentation.

*Obj.* And whereas it may be objected, That praiſing of God is not mention'd in that place no more than ſinging; therefore neither is praiſing of God there required at the Concluſion of that Ordinance.

*Anſw.* We anſwer, That every Mercy received by us from God, implyeth a Thankfulneſs to him, as our Duty we owe to him from whom we have received it. Therefore the Apoſtle *Paul* tells us, 1 *Tim.* 4. 4. That *every Creature of God is good, if it be received with Thankſgiving.* And we are commanded in every thing to give Thanks: Therefore the greater the Mercy is that we receive from God, the more inlarged ought our Hearts to be in Praiſe and Thankſgiving to God from whom we do receive it. Neither doth this imply, as they cavil, that then it is left to our Wiſdom to teach us in this matter, ſince we are directed by the Wiſdom of God, what to do in all ſuch caſes; eſpecially, when he is pleaſed to afford to us, or to priviledg us with ſuch choice and ſingular Mercies.

Having thus (we hope plainly) made manifeſt how little that Hymning of our bleſſed Saviour with his Diſciples, either affirms or confirms their popular way of Singing, we ſhall now (as the Lord ſhall enable us) examine that other Text of Scripture which is quoted as a Precedent for their

Practice,

Practice, which is *Acts* 16. 25. The Text ſaith, Paul *and* Silas *at Midnight pray'd, and ſung Praiſes to God; and the Priſoners heard them.*

To which we ſay, 1. That we may take their Praying and Praiſing to be one intire ſolemn Act, though two parts of it be ſeverally noted; neither is there any Inconvenience in ſo underſtanding it; which ſeems the more likely for the Reaſons mention'd in the firſt Enquiry: Nor doth the Greek word tranſlated (*ſung Praiſes*) reſtrain us from ſuch an Apprehenſion, but rather confirm it.

2. Suppoſe their ſinging of Praiſes were with a melodious Voice; how doth it appear, that they ſung in Conſort, lifting up their Voices together? We may as well from the Text, ſuppoſe they pray'd in Conſort with their Voices: For the Scripture implies that the Priſoners heard both their Prayers and Praiſes. What they anſwer to this, is, that it is the common Voice of Mankind, that many be id to pray together when one is their Mouth: t they cannot be ſaid to ſing Praiſes together, eſs they lift up their Voices in Conſort; which ill to beg the Queſtion, and to bring nothing proof but the common Vogue or Cuſtom; ich is moſt commonly greatly differing from the nguage and Cuſtom of the holy Spirit, declared the New Teſtament.

3. But ſuppoſe they did then expreſs the Joy of heir Hearts, by a melodious ſinging in Conſort together, what is that to the purpoſe to prove a ſtated Goſpel-Ordinance, a ſtanding Inſtitution of ſolemn Worſhip in the New-Teſtament-Church? The uſe of civil or devout Singing is not denied, either ſingle or in conſort, to Perſons in their private Converſation, as we ſaid before, either to re-

freſh the tired Spirits of thoſe, who think themſelves refreſh'd thereby ; or to expreſs their inward Joy, who think it a proper Expedient : And the more religionſly it is performed, the better it is. But if any Perſon ſhall from thence preſume to bring it into the Church, without a Divine Warrant, they may be found intruding Tranſgreſſors in the Day of the Lord.

Thus having (we hope) evidently diſcovered the Weakneſs of the Foundation, upon which they build their Practice of common and popular Singing, and anſwered their chief Objections which they have made againſt what was preſented in that Epiſtle, which they pretend ſoberly to anſwer, we ſhall only add ſome few Remarks upon ſome Paſſages in that Book of theirs.

*Pag.* 42. They ask this Queſtion, Why we do not anſwer what renowned Mr. *Cotton*, Dr. *Roberts*, Mr. *Sydenham*, Mr. *Caryl*, Mr. *Wells*, Mr. *Jeſſe*, Mr. *Knowles*, Mr. *Keach*, Dr. *Wright*, Mr. *Whinnel*, & Mr. *Ford* have ſaid on this Subject ?

To which we anſwer ; That we deſire to ſatisfy our ſelves in the diſcharge of our Conſcience what we are convinced to be our Duty ; and as we own moſt of them in their Catalogue, to be Men of renown, both for Parts and Godlineſs, what they write upon that Subject, doth no more ſatisfy us, than what they write for the proof of Infant-Baptiſm, doth ſatisfy them that ask the Queſtion of us ? And what they have writ in anſwer to them, doth as little ſatisfy them, as if they had not writ at all.

Further, We do not queſtion but in anſwering Mr. *Keach* in this Treatiſe, we have ſpoken to the chief of their Arguments on this Subject ; he being very

very dextrous to take Gold or Droſs out of other Mens Writings, and preſent them as his own: Neither have they any more ſpecious Pillars to uphold this common way of Singing than thoſe that are pleaded for in this Treatiſe of theirs, which we have now anſwered.

But Laſtly, We do much wonder that Mr. *Keach* and Mr. *Whinnel*, ſhould give themſelves the Stile of being renowned; they being the Authors of that Book, in which they give this *Encomium* of their being *Men of Renown:* It is but their own Opinion of themſelves, not (it may be) of others that know them. However Modeſty would have cauſed them (if they had exerciſed any) to have forborn to have ſpread their own Praiſe. But ſurely Mr. *Whinnel* and Mr. *K.* forgot the Wiſe Man's Sayings, Prov. 25. 27. *For Men to ſearch their own Glory, is not Glory.* And Prov. 27. 2. *Let another Man praiſe thee, and not thine own Mouth.* And elſewhere that ſame Wiſe Man tells us, *Some Men are wiſer in their own conceit, than ſeven Men that can render a Reaſon.*

They again enquire, how we dare ſay that Singing of Pſalms with Voices is not of Divine Inſtitution?

In anſwer to which, we ask them again, How they dare to ſay, that Singing of Pſalms in Meeter, with a tunable Voice, by the whole Church, and a mixt Multitude, is of Divine Inſtitution, when not one Word of all they have written doth prove it? It hath been already granted, that Singing of Pſalms in the Temple-Worſhip was of Divine Inſtitution. And we acknowledg that all the Songs and Pſalms in the Old Teſtament, are the undoubted unerring Word of God, and of excellent uſe to

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all the Servants of God, profitable for Doctrine and Conſolation; wherein are contained many excellent Experiences of God's gracious dealing with his People, and many bleſſed Promiſes and Prophecies for the eſtabliſhment of the Church and Servants of God. But we ſay the Singing of thoſe Pſalms, as they had reſpect to the Temple-Worſhip, with their Muſical Singing and inſtruments, with the Perſons aſſigned for that kind of Exerciſe, are all at an end. You will find 55 of them directed to the Maſter of Muſick, and 15 of them called each a Song of Degrees, and moſt of them directed to the Sons of *Korah*. And by the moſt Learned and Renowned Men of our Age, it is aſſerted that thoſe Ordinances being ended by the Coming of Chriſt, who was to deſtroy the City and the Sanctuary, and to cauſe the Sacrifice and Oblation to ceaſe: It remains now that the Word of Chriſt dwell richly in us, in all Wiſdom; and that we be filled with the Spirit, ſpeaking to our ſelves, teaching and admoniſhing one another in Pſalms, and Hymns and Spiritual Songs, *&c.* And if that manner of Worſhip, under the Law, is ceaſed, as is affirmed by the Learned and Pious that it is, then can it not be in the manner of that Adminiſtration in any reſpect, unleſs you will ſay that the Type and the Anti-Type are all one. But if the Goſpel be the Anti-Type of thoſe Types, then we muſt conclude that as they were outward in their Melody and Muſick, ſo the Melody now under the Goſpel muſt be inward or ſpiritual: That is, the joyful Voice, ſignifying the Melody and Joy of our Hearts to God, expreſſed in Praiſing and Thankſgiving to God, who hath revealed more of his Grace by Jeſus Chriſt, *That he who is a Spirit, may be worſhipp'd in*

*Spirit*

*Spirit and in Truth.* As Learned Dr. *Owen* ſaith, in his Expoſition on *Heb.* 2. 13. before cited.

And whereas they ſay, that they utterly deny that Prayer is a lower ſort of Worſhip than Singing. We anſwer, That if they mean Singing in their Senſe, we agree with them; but if in the Senſe of the Scripture, we do affirm, that Praiſes, which are the matter of a Song, is a Duty of a higher Nature than Prayer. For, (1.) The praiſing of God is that Duty which Saints and Angels will be employed in for ever; but Prayer ceaſeth. On this account it is, that the Apoſtle tells us that Charity is the greateſt, becauſe it always abideth, 1 *Cor.* 13. (2.) Praiſe is giving to God the Glory of his Mercy received; but Prayer is the begging from God the Mercies he hath promiſed, and which we ſtand in need of: But we ſhall not follow them in all their Miſtakes and Impertinencies.

They alſo tell us they are againſt the compoſing, ſing and impoſing ſet-Forms of Prayer. But ould they but make known the Reaſons, why ey are againſt ſet-Forms of Prayer, no doubt but ey would have anſwered themſelves, in all they uld ſubſtantially alledg for their ſet-Form Sing-g, and have ſaved us the labour. But it is a Queſtion whether it be ſo or no? For this we find, hat thoſe very Arguments, thoſe very ſcornful Reflections that thoſe that are for ſet-Form Prayer do uſe againſt them that are oppoſite to that formal Will-Worſhip, do theſe uſe to them that are againſt their ſet-Form Singing, or Praiſing of God. As for inſtance, Do the one call in Scorn, Praying by a Spiritual Gift, *ex tempore* Praying, in a confuſed Manner? ſo do theſe to the like purpoſe, ſpeak of praiſing or ſinging Praiſe to God without

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a ſet-Form, *Pag.* 39. In the like manner, as the one ſay, If you pray by the Spirit, your Prayer would be of equal Authority to Canonical Scripture; ſo do theſe concerning ſinging Praiſe without a ſet-Form, *Pag.* 36. Do the one ſay in deriſion, that thoſe that are againſt ſet-Form Prayer, are Enthuſiaſts, or ſetters up of Enthuſiaſm; ſo do theſe in their pretended ſober Reply ſay againſt thoſe that deny their ſet-Form Singing, *Pag.* 57, *&c.* We hear that one whoſe Heart and Mind (we believe) as well as Name, is to that Book of theirs, hath aſſerted, that Enthuſiaſm came in with the Doctrine of Believers Baptiſm, whereby he would make our Lord Jeſus the Author and Promoter of it, that Doctrine of Baptiſm aforeſaid being originally from his Command and Practice. It were eaſy to anſwer to all theſe Cavils and Scorns caſt upon us; but we ſhall forbear at preſent, becauſe we would firſt know from them (ſeeing they ſay they are reſolved to anſwer, and ſo to hold on this Controverſy) what they have to ſay to wipe off theſe Slurs caſt upon their manner of Praying, and yet that they may be deſervedly caſt upon thoſe that are for praiſing or ſinging Praiſe by the ſame Spirit, aſſiſting in the ſame manner as he doth in Prayer. But by theſe things, the Baptized Churches may behold what that Spirit is that would introduce this common Singing among them that hath been ſo long rejected by them; even the ſame that hath brought in, and maintain'd all that carnal Worſhip, which by the Anti-chriſtian Apoſtacy, hath fill'd the World to this Day. And hereby they may ſee whereto it would lead them, even back to lick up the old Vomit; which will be the more pernicious to them than others, becauſe they

they have been (through Grace) farther delivered from it than many others: and therefore their turning back, will be the more grievous and provoking to the Spirit of the Lord: though our gracious Lord is pleased to deal very gently with his People in all their Weaknesses or Mistakes, while a perverse Spirit is not found among them. Wherefore we declare, We have no disgust against, nor would we maintain any Distance or Difference with those Brethren, whose Apprehensions may not be the same with ours in this matter about Singing; who carry it not only piously, but peaceably in their Stations, and among the Churches. Some of whose Names are set to the Recommendation of this Book (which we in the Substance of it, have endeavoured to answer) tho without their Knowledg or Consent. For we believe they are so sober and righteous, that whatever their Opinion might be of the Argument, they would never have set their Names to such a universal Approbation, without a faithful Witness against those abominable and lamentable extravagant false Accusations, Reflections and Slanders, contain'd in it.

As for Mr. *Whinnel*, whose misguided Zeal may have misled him with some Misinformings, to reflect upon us without cause, as he hath: He being a Person of a very courteous and obliging Conversation, we hope he will for time to come, if not better, consider his Arguments for that common set-form Singing, which he doth endeavour to promote; yet, at least, forbear such causless Reflections against those that do in Judgment and Conscience dissent from him in that matter.

As for Mr. *Keach*, who hath been the chief Instrument to raise up this Controversy, which may occasion

occaſion more Contention than Edification in the Baptized Churches, we heartily deſire he may for time to come labour after the things which make for Peace. We know, and he himſelf alſo, how long he hath maintained a Wall of Partition between him and the reſt of the Baptized Churches, allowing no Church-Communion but ſuch as can agree with him in his Opinion and Practice of Laying on of Hands upon the Members of the Church, both Men and Women, which Practice we find no where commanded by our Lord Jeſus, nor his Apoſtles; yet we have not made it a Bone of Contention between him and us, neither concerned our ſelves for many Years, to make any publick Conteſt about it; but to ſay no more of that matter, only what relates to the Book it ſelf.

1. Whereas in the Title of it, it's recommended by divers Elders and Miniſters of Baptized Churches, mentioning the Names of ſeveral; ſome of them affirm they never ſet their Hands to it, ſaying, they know not how their Hands came there; and the Epiſtle it ſelf, to which their Names are ſet, they never ſaw until they ſaw it printed. And where in the Title it's farther ſaid, it is recommended by divers Elders and Miniſters of the Baptized Churches, we know that ſome of them are not Miniſters nor Elders, nor ſo much as Members in Communion with any Baptized Church as we know of.

2. He hath very unjuſtly charged the Churches which were firſt gathered, that they were of Opinion, and did unanimouſly declare, that for a Goſpel-Miniſter to have a Yearly Allowance, was an Human Invention, and Antichriſtian: whereas the contrary to which they have declared in their Confeſſion of Faith, printed by them ſoon after they

they came together, as may more at large be seen in the former part of our Answer: and it may farther appear what their Practice was in those Times, by a late Printed Book, entituled, The Life and Death of Mr. *Hanserd Knowlls*, written in his Life-time with his own Hand: wherein he hath left this Testimony, *pag.* 23, 24. that he was Pastor to a Church in the Year 1645, and he received from the Church always according to their Ability, most of the Members being poor. What Man fearing God, and desiring to preserve the Truth he himself professeth durst affirm so false a thing? And what use may be made of it, by such as are glad of any Opportunity to speak Evil of the Ways of God, we leave to the Consideration of all Men.

Finally; We earnestly intreat the Baptized Churches, their Elders, Ministers and Members, to consider what hath been said concerning this Question about Singing; and that they would not any of them rashly or hastily, upon any plausible pretences, be perswaded to set up that Way of set-form Singing; which those Churches, in times past, did on mature Deliberation, from the Light recorded, reject together with set-form Prayer. But the Lord grant that we all may be pressing after more Purity both in the Form and Spirit of Holy-Worship; not declining to any thing that is not of Divine Institution. In the mean time, bearing one with another in Love, wherein we may be of differing Apprehensions in those or other Matters that are of lower Concernment, not being desirous of vain glory, provoking one another; studying and earnestly labouring every one of us, to maintain Peace and Holiness in our Souls, in our Families, and in the Churches of our Lord Jesus,

that

that the God of Love and Peace may be with us. We shall conclude with that Word, *Heb.* 13. 20. *Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good Work to do his Will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ: to whom be Glory for ever and ever.* Amen. We subscribe our selves, Your Brethren in the Faith and Fellowship of the Gospel,

*William Kiffin, George Barrett,*
*Robert Steed, Edward Man.*

*FINIS.*

*Errata.* Pag. 16. l. 11. for *wer.* *some.* P. 23. l. 16. r. *in them do they.*

*ADVERTISEMENT.*

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